**‘Language, migration and identity at school: A sociolinguistic study with Polish adolescents in Glasgow’**

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I worked with 14 pupils who were born in Poland, and 7 who were born in Glasgow. All now attend a single high school in Glasgow. In this school community, the majority of speakers use Glaswegian Scots alongside the Scottish Standard English of the classroom.

I conducted detailed analysis of four Glaswegian linguistic features:

* The use of *aye* in place of *yeah / yes / uh-huh*
* The use of e.g. *cannae* in place of *can’t* and *didnae* in place of *didn’t*
* The use of *no’* in place of *not*, e.g. *I’m no’ hungry yet*
* The use of the glottal stop

I also conducted less detailed analysis of several other Glaswegian linguistic features.

I recorded the pupils speaking in various social situations. The pupils were recorded in an after-school club, in conversation with an adult they knew quite well and who had a Scottish accent (me) and in conversation with an adult who was a stranger to them and didn’t have a Scottish accent.

I asked whether the Polish pupils were picking up the Glaswegian features and using them in the same way as their locally-born classmates.

**Summary of findings**

1. Overall finding – yes, the Polish pupils are picking up the Glaswegian linguistic features. All are using someGlaswegian features, and most are using as many Glaswegian features as their locally-born classmates.
2. a. The Glaswegian pupils alter their speech across the different social situations; e.g. they are more likely to use *aye* in the after-school club, and more likely to use *yes* with an adult who was a stranger.
3. The Polish pupils alter their speech more dramatically than the Glaswegians across the different social situations.
4. The Polish pupils show a striking ability to pick up on social language cues in their new language. To my knowledge, no one has tested language learners’ social language abilities in this way before (i.e. comparing different social situations). This is new evidence suggesting that migrant language learners show amazing sociolinguistic abilities.
5. The Polish pupils are being more socially ‘careful’ with their language than the Glaswegian pupils (this is mostly on a subconscious level). This could be due to linguistic insecurity; in sociolinguistics we often see patterns of ‘hypercorrection’ like this coming from speakers who feel that they occupy an insecure social space, and who have some anxiety about their language use. Trying to ‘fit in’ might be what leads the Polish pupils to show these heightened patterns. It could also relate to the heightened attention paid to their speech in their education (i.e. their pronunciation might be more likely to be corrected than that of their Glaswegian classmates).
6. a. Some Polish pupils use more Glaswegian linguistic features than others.
7. The pupils who use more Glaswegian features are not those who have been in Glasgow longer; some pupils who have been in Glasgow for only a year use lots of Glaswegian features, and some who have been in Glasgow for 7 or 8 years use fewer.
8. The pupils who use more Glaswegian features are not those who arrived at a younger age; some pupils who arrived as adolescents use lots of Glaswegian features, and some who arrived at pre-school age use fewer.
9. The pupils who use more Glaswegian features are not generally those who have more Glaswegian friends; the exception to this is with word-medial glottal stops in words e.g. *bottle –* those with more Glaswegian friends do use more of these glottal stops. This might be because the patterns surrounding the use of this linguistic feature are quite complicated, and learners need to hear it used a lot before they can begin to use it themselves.
10. a. I asked whether those pupils who identify more strongly with Glasgow and who see themselves as Glaswegian use more Glaswegian features. However, in investigating Glaswegian identity amongst the pupils, I came to the conclusion that for these pupils, there doesn’t seem to be any such thing as ‘feeling Glaswegian’.
11. As they move away from being new arrivals at the school, the Polish kids move into a complex map of local social and linguistic identity, with lots of different ways to place themselves. They don’t begin to speak or behave like Glaswegian adolescents, they begin to speak and behave like certain kinds of Glaswegian adolescents; like e.g. part of the popular crowd or part of the goth crowd or part of the football team.
12. Very little research so far has looked at how migrants negotiate the complexities of local identity in their new communities; this is something I hope to work on in future research.